



## Arts for Learning CT PROGRAM GUIDE

### Stories & Folktales from Asia with **Motoko**

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To demonstrate how structure and developmental sequencing create powerful stories and engage the reader.
- To familiarize audiences with traditional folk motifs.
- To inspire confidence in students' imaginations.
- To emphasize originality and non-violent problem solving.
- To educate audiences on Asian culture through stories, songs, games, and personal narratives.

## ABOUT THE PROGRAMS

Motoko's stories thrill and amuse her audiences, and are sure to delight. Her programs are designed to demonstrate good storytelling, as well as impart solid storytelling techniques so that audiences may even create and share their own stories.

## RESIDENCIES

Prior to beginning a unit, Motoko begins her residencies with a brief discussion on the geography, climate, and history of Japan. Each unit Motoko focuses on covers a unique and specific aspect of Japanese culture, from the festivals and holidays, to the myths, legends, and folktales of her native homeland. Motoko also provides a residency focusing on the art of storytelling. Here, Motoko instructs students in creating their own stories with an emphasis on identity, community, and respect. She imparts the tools and knowledge necessary to craft good stories.



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Connecticut



# About the Artist & Program Preparations

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Prior to arriving in the U.S. Motoko attended university in Tokyo – in her home nation of Japan. Motoko became a storyteller many years ago to combine the two things she loves the most; reading and acting. She has shared her stories, songs and culture with students, teachers and communities all over the world, including the US National Storytelling Festival and on Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood.

## STORYTELLING PERFORMANCES

**Folktales from Asia** (Grades K-12)  
45 min. Audience limit: 150 students. Clad in a Japanese jacket called a "haori," Motoko tells folktales from Japan, China, Korea and Southeast Asia with participatory songs and mimicry.

**Ni Hao Peng You!** (Hello Friends!)-  
Stories from China (Grades K-12) In her new program she shares some of the tales and songs she learned in China, and discusses her experiences with the village elders and children. Calligraphy and other art activities may be included.

## PRE/POST PROGRAM

- Have a short lesson on Japanese culture and history.
- What is a folktale? Do any of Your students know any folktales?
- What do your students think makes a good story?

## POST PROGRAM

- Discuss how characters and character development play into Motoko's stories.
- Ask your students what effect does setting have on a story.
- Analyze the plots of Motoko's stories. Discuss the important turning points and resolutions.
- What did Motoko demonstrate about problem solving? How can the solutions found by the characters in her stories be used in daily life?
- What morals did Motoko's stories reveal and how do they carry over into daily life?

## SAMPLE WORKSHOPS

### Boys' Day and Girls' Day (Grades 1-4)

- Discussion of how children are celebrated in Japan. Motoko tells "The Princess Who Loved Bugs", a 12th century Japanese tale of a girl's courage and creativity. Then students make warrior's helmets for Boys' day. Instructions for Girls' Day art activity will be given to the teachers.

### Sumo Wrestling (Grades 1-4)

- Discussion on sports in Japan. Special focus on sumo as a traditional sport that emphasizes respect and self-control. The session includes a sumo story, and a paper sumo game that every child loves!

### Oni Monster in Japanese Folklore (Grades 1-4)

- The oni, an ogre, is a familiar figure in Japanese folktales and legends. The session includes an oni story, and explanation for Setsubun, a Japanese children's ritual for driving away the monster. Each student makes a paper oni mask.

### Japanese New Year's (Grades K-3)

- New Year's Day is the most important holiday for Japanese people. Motoko discusses food, clothing, and customs, and tell a folktale that explains the origin of the Asian zodiac system, which uses names of 12 animals for indicating the year. Students make Lucky Smile Game, a traditional Japanese version of "Pin the Tail on the Donkey."

## CURRICULAR LINKS

Source: National Core Curriculum Standards for English

Language Arts: Speaking and Listening-Comprehension and Collaboration; Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Language Standards-Knowledge of Language; Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

*"Children of all ages expressed tremendous enthusiasm for their experience with Motoko, noting her traditional way of dressing, her charming mannerisms, her fascinating stories, and the special way in which she combined mime and stories."* -

**Leonard Strauss, Principal, Swift River School, New Salem, MA**



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